

**House File 548 - Introduced**

HOUSE FILE 548  
BY COMMITTEE ON HUMAN  
RESOURCES

(SUCCESSOR TO HSB 122)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act providing for vision screening for school children.  
2 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 135.39D Vision screening.

2 1. The parent or guardian of a child to be enrolled in a  
3 public or accredited nonpublic elementary school shall ensure  
4 that the child is screened for vision impairment at least once  
5 before enrollment in kindergarten and again before enrollment  
6 in grade three. The parent or guardian of the child shall  
7 ensure that evidence of the vision screening is provided to the  
8 school district or accredited nonpublic school in which the  
9 child is enrolled. Evidence of the vision screening may be  
10 provided either directly from the parent or guardian or from a  
11 vision screening provider referred to in subsection 2, and may  
12 be provided in either written or electronic form.

13 2. The requirement for vision screening may be satisfied by  
14 any of the following:

15 a. A vision screening or comprehensive eye examination by a  
16 licensed ophthalmologist or licensed optometrist.

17 b. A vision screening conducted at a pediatrician's or  
18 family practice physician's office, a free clinic, a licensed  
19 child care center, a local public health department, a  
20 public or accredited nonpublic school, or a community-based  
21 organization identified by the director, or by an advanced  
22 registered nurse practitioner or physician assistant.

23 c. An online vision screening through a program approved by  
24 the director. An online vision screening may be conducted by  
25 a child's parent or guardian.

26 d. A photoscreening vision screening through Iowa kidsight  
27 or another program approved by the director.

28 3. A person who performs a vision screening required  
29 pursuant to this section shall report the results of the vision  
30 screening to the department. The department may collect and  
31 maintain such reports through the statewide immunization  
32 registry or a private contractor.

33 4. Each public and accredited nonpublic elementary school  
34 shall, in collaboration with the department, do the following:

35 a. Ensure the parent or guardian of a student enrolled in

1 kindergarten or grade three has complied with this section.

2     *b.* If a student enrolled in kindergarten or grade three  
3 is found not to have had their vision screened as required  
4 pursuant to this section, provide the parent or guardian of the  
5 student with vision screening referral resources.

6     *c.* Provide the department with evidence that each student  
7 enrolled in kindergarten and grade three has had their vision  
8 screened as required pursuant to this section.

9     5. A child shall not be prohibited from attending school  
10 based upon the failure of a parent or guardian to ensure that  
11 the child has received the vision screening required by this  
12 section.

13     6. If a vision screening required pursuant to this section  
14 identifies potential vision impairment in a child, the person  
15 who performed the vision screening shall, if the person is not  
16 a licensed ophthalmologist or licensed optometrist, refer the  
17 child to a licensed ophthalmologist or licensed optometrist for  
18 a comprehensive eye examination.

19     7. The department shall establish procedures to contact  
20 parents or guardians of children identified as having potential  
21 vision impairment based on the results of a vision screening  
22 required pursuant to subsection 1 or a comprehensive eye  
23 examination required pursuant to subsection 6 in order to  
24 provide information on obtaining necessary vision correction.

25     8. The department may share information with licensed  
26 health care providers, agencies, and other persons involved  
27 with vision screenings, eye examinations, follow-up services,  
28 and intervention services as necessary to administer this  
29 section. The department shall adopt rules to protect the  
30 confidentiality of the individuals involved.

31     9. The vision screening requirement shall not apply if  
32 the vision screening conflicts with a parent's or guardian's  
33 genuine and sincere religious belief.

34     10. A person who acts in good faith in complying with this  
35 section shall not be civilly or criminally liable for reporting

1 the information required to be reported by this section.

2 11. The department shall adopt rules necessary to  
3 administer this section.

4 EXPLANATION

5 This bill requires the parent or guardian of a child to be  
6 enrolled in a public or accredited nonpublic elementary school  
7 to ensure that the child is screened for vision impairment  
8 at least once before enrollment in kindergarten and again  
9 before enrollment in grade three. The bill requires the parent  
10 or guardian to ensure that evidence of the vision screening  
11 is provided to the child's school and sets out methods for  
12 providing such evidence. The bill lists various ways the  
13 vision screening requirement may be satisfied.

14 The bill requires a person who performs a required vision  
15 screening to report the results of the vision screening to  
16 the department of public health. The bill provides that the  
17 department may collect and maintain such reports through the  
18 statewide immunization registry or a private contractor.

19 The bill establishes various duties for each public and  
20 accredited nonpublic elementary school, in collaboration with  
21 the department of public health, to implement the bill.

22 The bill specifies that a child cannot be prohibited from  
23 attending school based upon the failure of a parent or guardian  
24 to ensure that the child has received the required vision  
25 screening.

26 The bill requires a person performing a required vision  
27 screening, if the person is not a licensed ophthalmologist or  
28 licensed optometrist, to refer children identified as having  
29 potential vision impairment to a licensed ophthalmologist or  
30 licensed optometrist for a comprehensive eye examination.

31 The bill requires the department of public health to  
32 establish procedures to contact parents or guardians of  
33 children in need of vision correction based on the results of a  
34 required vision screening in order to provide information on  
35 obtaining necessary vision correction.

1 The bill permits the department of public health to share  
2 information with various entities as necessary to administer  
3 the bill. The bill requires the department to adopt rules to  
4 protect the confidentiality of the individuals involved.

5 The vision screening requirement does not apply if the  
6 vision screening conflicts with a parent's or guardian's  
7 genuine and sincere religious belief.

8 A person who acts in good faith in complying with the bill  
9 shall not be civilly or criminally liable for reporting the  
10 information required by the bill.